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CARL MÜLLER, THE SCULPTOR.

MASTERS OF ART AND LITERATURE.

Third Article.

Among the rising men of genius may be classed CARL MÜLLER, SCULPTOR OF THE "MINSTREL'S CURSE," who, though foreign born, must now be regarded as an American citizen, having chosen this country for his home. Müller was born in that nest of romance and renown, Coblenz on the Rhine, in the year 1820, consequently is now nearly thirty-six years of age. His father, William Müller, was a goldsmith by profession, and a man of cultivated taste. Surrounded by the associations which attach themselves to that highly honorable profession, in Germany, Carl received his first introduction to Art. It was in the same workshops that those great masters, Cellini and Ghiberti, wrought, and attained to their glory from the lessons first learned in the exquisite workmanship of the jeweller and gold designer: it is not strange, then, that young Müller's soul was there fired with the passion which has since produced such noble results.

From his infancy, almost, Carl was addicted to drawing and modelling. At the age of ten, he entered the Royal College of Coblenz, remaining there until his eighteenth year. Then he spent one year in his father's shop, acquiring that wonder-

ful skill and precision in mechanism which now distinguishes him. Fired with the ambition that usually stirs the heart of genius to great work, he parted from his parents and made for Paris, where, in the studio of sculptor Davids, and in the study of works of Art, so numerous in that city, he spent three years with great profit. At the end of this time, being of age, he was summoned home to receive a discharge from military service, to which he was liable. Before returning to Paris, he resolved upon a tour through his native land. He visited all localities consecrated by the genius of Dürer and the other great masters of Art in Germany. For several years he remained in Germany, making these pilgrimages to the Art-shrines. In one of them he made the acquaintance of the banker Mendelssohn, son of the great philosopher, and father of the great musician, of the same name, who would fain persuade him to make Berlin his home; but a letter from the sculptor Rude, entreating him to return to Paris, turned his steps once more towards the "gay capital." From thence, after a short stay, he would have passed into Italy, at the earnest solicitation of friends; but Rude and his friends had other plans in store: and, at their earnest solicitation, he commenced the execution, in marble, of the "Minstrel's Curse," of which he then had a sketch. Laboring at intervals during four

years, the sublime work was finished: and now it stands as one of the finest monuments of modern genius. The subject embodies the legend of Uhland, commencing—

"In olden times was standing, a castle fair to see."

The conception and execution of this statue have placed Müller in the foremost rank of the rising race of sculptors; and they give earnest of future works which shall render his name an immortal one. still young and hopeful, and full of the true fire, he lives to labor, and from that labor we may look for a rich return. But we anticipate. For this statue, Müller received marks of approbation from distinguished artists and connoisseurs; while the Royal Academy of Paris bestowed upon him the gold medal—an honor any artist might well covet; but to one so young, a foreigner, and so unknown, it was a decided tribute to his genius. All criticism was in praise of the work, which promised, from its boldness and originality, to infuse into Art a taste for those loftier conceptions of genius which have the Laocoon for their prototype. But Müller was not *at home* in the French capital, notwithstanding his success. His spirit could not brook sycophany to government, the attendance upon aristocracy required for position and assured success; and, hence, he turned his face hitherward, where his young energies could find full scope in the midst of a people truly free.

In 1850, having had pressing invitations to visit America, he embarked for New-York with his celebrated group. Upon his arrival, it was exhibited in the rooms of the National Academy of Design, and gave him an immediate recognition as a master. At the opening of the Crystal Palace, it was transferred to that exhibition, and still remains there, attracting visitors and exciting remark.

Since his arrival in this country, Mr. Müller has executed several fine works; among them may be mentioned, the "Stamp Act," and the "Fireman." Numerous smaller works and designs have also come from his hands, which are highly prized.

We may close this hasty sketch by quoting the words of Dr. Edward H. Dixon, editor of the *Scalpel*, and who furnished us with the *materiel* for this article:

"Müller is still young, and possesses a vigor of mind and body which indicates

the power of producing something which will greatly extend his name. His chief characteristic is vigor, combined with a high knowledge of anatomy and action, and facility of execution. His works are executed with a rapidity that is astonishing. His subjects seem to grow up under his hand, as by magic. As an instance of this, we may mention that his bronze medallions of Washington, Franklin, Webster, Clay and Calhoun, executed for Mr. Derby, the enterprising and accomplished President of the Cosmopolitan Art Association, were completed in a space of time so short as to surprise even those who were accustomed to witness his extraordinary execution.

"It is somewhat unfortunate that our National Academy of Design, in New-York, unlike those of the great capitals of Europe, has, as yet, made no provision for the great department of sculpture. In consequence of this, Müller has been obliged to exhibit his works elsewhere,—among other places, at the American Institute, which has, each time, awarded him a gold or silver medal,—the highest honor in his department.

"We hope that the high position sculpture is yet destined to attain in America, not only as a means of exhibiting the beautiful, but also as a potent element in our popular education, will secure it a place in our exhibitions of Art, as well as in the grateful affection of our people



It is not particularly creditable to American Art, that the plates of the two most elegantly-illustrated books published on this side the Atlantic were executed in Europe. The plates of the "Republican Court," published by Appleton, were engraved and printed in London, from original pictures sent from here; while the plates in the "Court of Napoleon," published by Derby & Jackson, were engraved, printed, and colored in Paris. The best illustrated editions of Longfellow have been printed in London, although they have been issued with the names of his Boston publishers. Audubon was compelled to have the plates of his great work on American Ornithology executed in France; but Downing could find no one in Paris to color the plates of his large work on American Fruits, and at last succeeded in finding the right talent in Buffalo.

THE PALMER MARBLES.



RASTUS D. PALMER, the "Albany Sculptor," whose portrait and biography we gave in the November number of this Journal, is becoming suddenly known, and now stands pre-eminent in his profession. The desire to see his works, induced a number of the artizans of New-York to invite him to open his marbles in that city, for exhibition. He complied; and during the latter part of November, and the first of December, he exposed to the gaze and criticism of the public, twelve of his best works, including "Spring," the property of the Cosmopolitan. It is unnecessary to say, the exhibition was a great success. Critics and the vox populi praise the artist, and admire the works together.

The *N. Y. Mirror* thus refers to Mr. Palmer's last work, executed after the bust "Spring:"

"Mr. Palmer's *chef d'œuvre* is yet to be mentioned. For three years he has been engaged on the 'Indian Girl,' and in September of this year it was completed. Language will utterly fail in describing this—the most exquisite piece of idealization that has ever left the *atelier* of any sculptor, whether in Europe or our own land. Italy may point to her Canova, Denmark to her Thorwaldsen, France to her Houdon and David, and England to her Chantry; but any American, with the statue of the 'Indian Girl' before him, may feel easy about the laurels that the world will yet award to the great masters of the chisel. A young girl of sixteen ripe summers, robed in a dressed deer skin, with a wampum-wrought border, confined at the hip with a girdle, that conceals and yet discloses her rare loveliness—wandering from her companions, has discovered, amid the forest leaves, a cross. The figure of the crucified Redeemer transfixes her gaze, and 'the dawn of Christianity' gleams upon her pure soul. The delicate anatomy, the pure *pose* of the figure, the exquisite grace, the holy expression, and the delicious purity that drapes this 'thing of beauty,' truly makes it a 'joy forever.'"

This Association is fortunate in being able to give one of the sculptor's most beautiful and characteristic works to the world. May it be enabled, in the course

of a very few years, to send many such exquisite embodiments of genius abroad over the land, to plant the good seed of Art-loving in many a community!



ART ITEMS.

A NUMBER of English noblemen and gentlemen have recently imported into England, at their own risk, M. Soulage's collection of Italian Art, of all kinds—bronzes, pottery, furniture, &c., possessing unique examples of the artists of the sixteenth century—Michael Angelo, Pisani, Cellini, Maestro Giorgio, &c. It is intended to offer the collection to the British Government at cost price only, on the understanding that, if declined, the works will be disposed of by public auction, and the profits applied in some form to the promotion of Art. In the first instance the collection will be exhibited, and public opinion as to its value brought to bear upon the government, so that the question of purchasing may be thoroughly considered.

An original picture, by Raphael, has been lately rescued from oblivion, at Hampton Court. It seems (says the *Athenæum*) to be the portrait of Raphael, by his own hand, which was described by Passavant in his tour in England, as existing in Kensington Palace at the time of his visit. Since that period, many of the choicest pictures have been removed to Hampton Court, in order to afford the public a free enjoyment of them, and this appears to have been overlooked in the transit. The words "Raffaello Urbino fecit," are inscribed on a button of the painter's dress.

A PARIS CORRESPONDENT writes:—The Annual Art Exhibition, suspended during the years 1854 and 1855, on account of the Great Exhibition, embraces paintings, engravings, statuary, and architecture, and, as every one knows who has seen it in former years, is the most extensive exhibition of the kind in any country. It will open either in February or March, and fears are entertained that time enough has not been given to artists to finish their works, as the time has been advanced in order to accommodate another exhibition which is to follow—the annual exhibition of domestic animals, agricultural implements and products.